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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNR #4647/01 3381509
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 041509Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3739
INFO RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 9724
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 5609
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 4944
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2434
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 1713
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2487
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2411
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
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UNCLAS NAIROBI 004647

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KDEM PGOV PREL KE
SUBJECT: KENYA ELECTIONS: ANALYSIS OF PARLIAMENTARY
CANDIDATES LIST

REF: A. NAIROBI 4601 AND PREVIOUS

1B. NAIROBI 2215

11. (U) SUMMARY: Nearly ten percent of outgoing Members of Parliament (MPs) were eliminated in party nomination exercises while a further 25 percent lost major party nominations and took refuge with smaller parties where their prospects for reelection are exceedingly dim. President Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU) coalition is by far the most incumbent-friendly major party. Some minor parties are wholly owned by individuals widely alleged to be criminals. Women will contest in nearly 60 percent of constituencies, but make up just under ten percent of all candidates for Parliament. We expect an increase in elected women MPs, but still under ten percent of Parliament. Kibaki supporters, both within and outside the PNU coalition, account for nearly half of the 2,548 parliamentary candidates. In many constituencies outside Kibaki's stronghold of Central Province this means that the pro-Kibaki vote will be split, reducing chances for a pro-Kibaki parliamentary majority even should he win the presidential contest. END SUMMARY.

Incumbents Take An Initial Hit, But Most Are On the Ballot

12. (U) Of the 210 elected members of Kenya's 9th Parliament, two have voluntarily retired (including the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs) and 18 sought re-election but were eliminated in the party nomination exercises, including another Assistant Minister (Sports and Gender). A further 50 former members of parliament lost their party primaries, but secured nomination certificates from other parties (either smaller allied parties of the three major parties, or outright fringe parties).

13. (U) One hundred forty former MPs (two-thirds of the total) are running on the tickets of significant parties:

Party of National Unity (pro-Kibaki coalition):
52 ex-MPs out of 134 candidates (39 percent)

KANU (pro-Kibaki, former ruling party):
24 ex-MPs out of 90 candidates (26 percent)

FORD-People (pro-Kibaki ethnic Kisii party):
9 ex-MPs out of 107 candidates (8 percent)

NARC-Kenya (a pro-Kibaki party):
9 ex-MPs out of 58 candidates (15 percent)

Orange Democratic Movement (main opposition party):
28 ex-MPs out of 189 candidates (15 percent)

NARC (ODM affiliate):
7 ex-MPs out of 73 candidates (10 percent)

Orange Democratic Movement of Kenya (opposition):
18 ex-MPs out of 131 candidates (14 percent)

The PNU stands out as the party most friendly to ex-MPs, befitting its establishment image. Among all the pro-Kibaki parties, there are a total of 126 ex-MPs out of 1,212 candidates (10 percent).

Minor Parties & their Backers

¶4. (U) Some minor parties are significant due to their backers. The Manzingira Greens Party of Kenya was founded by Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai. Her party has a clear political ideology (environmentalist) and is aligned with the pro-Kibaki PNU. It is only fielding 49 candidates, of whom 13 are women (26 percent).

¶5. (U) Four notorious criminals have their own parties to run on. Kamlesh Patni, the alleged chief organizer of the Moi-era Goldenberg scandal, literally bought the registration certificate of the Kenya National Democratic Alliance party and has recruited 170 candidates to run on its ticket, including himself. While not formally aligned with Kibaki's PNU coalition, Patni is expected to support the President.

¶6. (SBU) Harun Mwau, widely believed to be a major narco-trafficker, runs the Party of Independent Candidates of Kenya. It is not formally affiliated with any other party and has business interests with figures from all Kenya's political camps. William Kabogo Gitau, an ex-MP and another widely-alleged drug dealer and violent thug, is running for parliament on the ticket of the obscure Sisi Kwa Sisi Party of Kenya, which is pro-Kibaki.

¶7. (SBU) Ndura Waruunge (AKA "Noriega") is the founder of the Mungiki, Kenya's largest criminal organization (see ref B). He is challenging opposition leader Raila Odinga in his Nairobi parliamentary constituency of Langata. Waruunge claims to have left the Mungiki, but PolCouns has yet to meet an informed Kenyan who believes this. The usual punishment for defection from the Mungiki is death. Waruunge openly employs political thugs who cultivate the image of Mungiki members. Waruunge's United Democratic Party of Kenya is not affiliated with the President's PNU coalition, but supports Kibaki.

Women Candidates

¶8. (U) A total of 248 women parliamentary candidates will contest the election. Higher figures produced by civil society organizations are erroneous. This amounts to about ten percent of all candidates contesting. Women candidates are running in 124 constituencies (59 percent of all constituencies). Among the major parties, the Orange Democratic Movement of Kenya (Kalonzo Musyoka) has the highest share of women candidates (11 percent), while the Orange Democratic Movement (Raila Odinga) has the lowest (5 percent). Kibaki's Party of National Unity registers 8 percent women candidates. In the last parliament, there were

nine elected women MPs (in addition to nominated women MPs). We expect this election to produce a greater number of women MPs, but still under ten percent of the total.

Distribution of Candidates by Party

19. (U) There are a total of 2,548 candidates for Parliament, an average of about 12 candidates per constituency or 23 candidates per party (108 parties are contesting parliamentary seats). A constituency in Nyanza Province is being contested by 33 candidates, the record for this election. Three constituencies, including President Kibaki's Othaya constituency, have only two candidates. The most significant parties are as follows, with some description of their regional representation:

Orange Democratic Movement (opposition):
190 out of 210 constituencies (90 percent)
All regions of the country, but only partial coverage in Central Province (Kibaki stronghold) and southern districts of Eastern Province (Musyoka stronghold).

NARC (an Orange Democratic Movement affiliate):
73 out of 210 constituencies (35 percent)
Throughout the country, except for Central Province and Northeastern Province.

Number of constituencies contested by pro-Odinga candidates:
191

Number of constituencies where pro-Odinga candidates compete against one another: 72
About ten percent of all candidates (263 total) are running on pro-Odinga tickets.

Party of National Unity (pro-Kibaki coalition):
135 out of 210 constituencies (64 percent)
All areas of the country except Nyanza Province.

Kenya African National Union (pro-Kibaki):
90 out of 210 constituencies (43 percent)
KANU often calls itself Kenya's only truly national party, yet it can only field candidates in less than half of all constituencies.

Other pro-Kibaki parties: 987 candidates

Number of constituencies contested by pro-Kibaki candidates:
nearly all

Number of constituencies where pro-Kibaki candidates compete against one another: nearly all.

Nearly half of all candidates are running on pro-Kibaki tickets, which means that in nearly every constituency in the country pro-Kibaki candidates are running against one another, splitting the pro-Kibaki vote. This does not hurt the president in his strongholds, where any potential winner will enter the pro-Kibaki camp in parliament. However, in mixed areas like Coast, Western and Rift Valley provinces, multiple pro-Kibaki candidates improves the chances of opposition candidates since only a plurality of the vote is required to win.

Orange Democratic Movement of Kenya (opposition):
131 out of 210 constituencies (62 percent)
Southern districts of Eastern province, Coast, Northeastern and Rift Valley provinces.

Labour Party of Kenya (ODM-K affiliate party):
16 out of 210 constituencies (7 percent)
Western province, parts of Coast Province and southern districts of Eastern province.

All pro-Musyoka parties:
147 candidates in 131 constituencies out of 210
constituencies (62 percent)

The Labour Party is competing against its ODM-K ally in all 16 of its parliamentary races. The de facto head of the Labour Party, Kalonzo Musyoka's ODM-K running mate, is running on an ODM-K, not a Labour party, ticket.

Party Symbols

¶10. (U) Party symbols as printed on ballots are an essential issue to older rural voters in Kenya, especially women in remote regions that have not benefited from the country's generally high literacy rate. The biggest party symbol controversy concerns the two rival opposition parties, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and the Orange Democratic Movement of Kenya (ODM-K). ODM's symbol is an orange, naturally enough. ODM-K's symbol is 1 1/2 oranges, which causes confusion. ODM and ODM-K rallies always include exhortations to vote for the correct number of oranges.

¶11. (U) With 108 parties contesting at the parliamentary level, a wide variety of symbols are in play. Microparties in Kenya are often referred to as "briefcase parties." The National Republican Party of Kenya, with a sole parliamentary candidate, befittingly has a briefcase as its party symbol. Intriguingly, the Jubilee People's Party of Kenya (two candidates) has chosen handcuffs as its party symbol.

RANNEBERGER